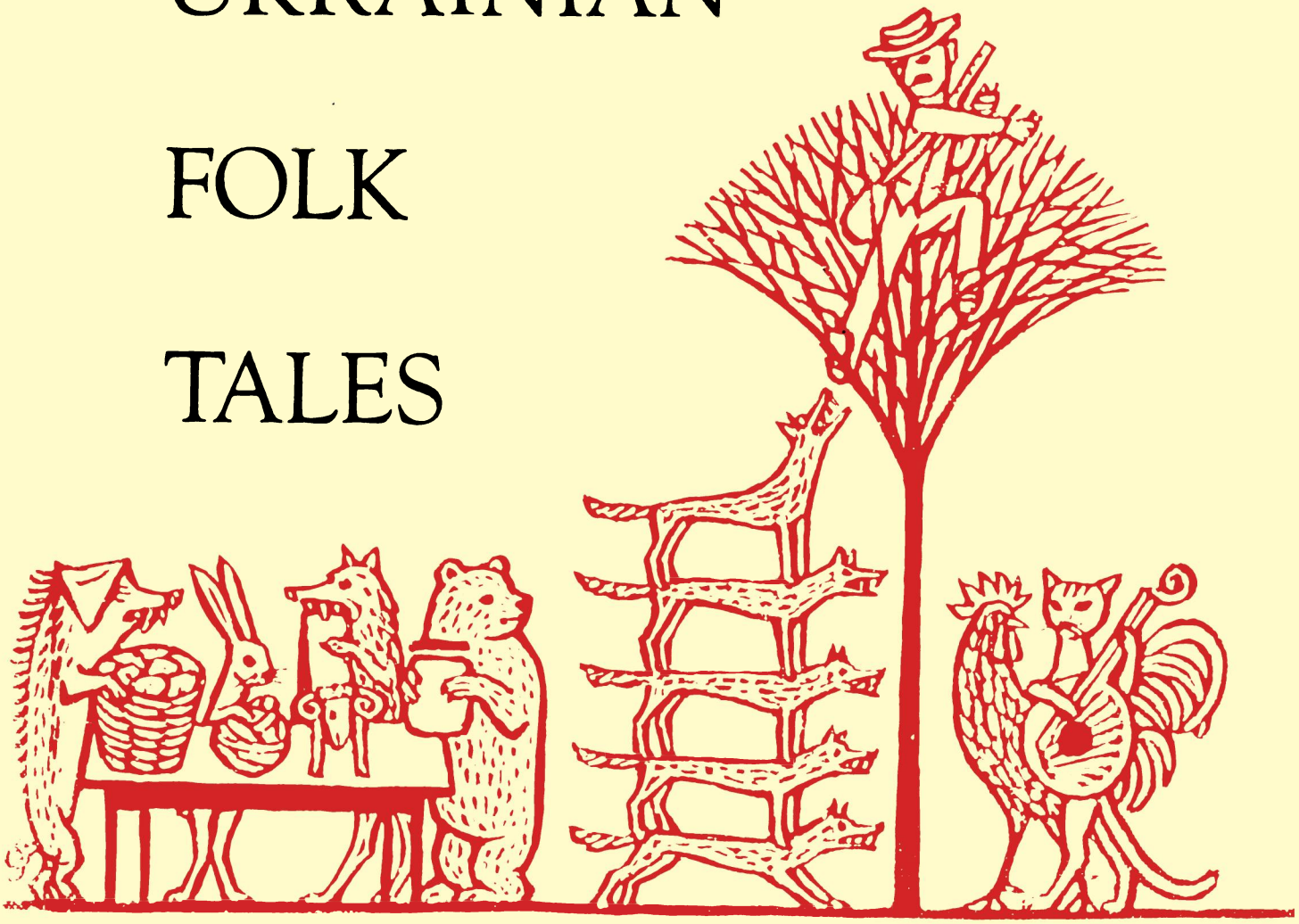
UKRAINIAN FOLK TALES



Translated by MARIE HALUN BLOCH

Illustrated by J. HNIZDOVSKY

About the Book

As a little girl in the Ukraine, Marie Bloch used to listen to her grandmother tell these folktales which are as familiar to Ukrainian children as *Little Red Riding Hood* is to American children. It was too bad, Mrs. Bloch thought, that American children didn't also know about *Pán Kotsky*, *Seerko* and *The Spiteful Nanny Goat.*

In order to tell these stories again just as they were told in the Ukraine, it was necessary first to find them in a book. Mrs. Bloch searched libraries in the United States, Canada and Europe before she found what she was looking for. Then she began translating, finding the right English words to carry the meaning of the original Ukrainian. Remembering how these stories sounded when her grandmother told them, Mrs. Bloch wanted them not only to read well but to sound well when read aloud. So before settling on a final form, she read them aloud on a tape recorder and listened to them as they were played back.

The result is the book you have, a book about roosters and goats, dogs and cats, that children in a faraway country have been listening to and laughing at for hundreds of years just as you are doing today.

UKRAINIAN FOLK TALES

Also by Marie Halun Bloch

DINOSAURS

THE HOUSE ON THIRD HIGH

MARYA OF CLARK AVENUE

MOUNTAINS ON THE MOVE

TONY OF THE GHOST TOWNS

TUNNELS

UKRAINIAN FOLK TALES

Translated by

Marie Halun Bloch

from the

Original Collections

of

Ivan Rudchenko and Maria Lukiyanenko

ILLUSTRATED BY J. HNIZDOVSKY

Coward-McCann, Inc. New York

To the memory of
Maria Pelenska Zayshla,
who passed down to me my Ukrainian heritage,
and to American readers, with whom I gladly share it

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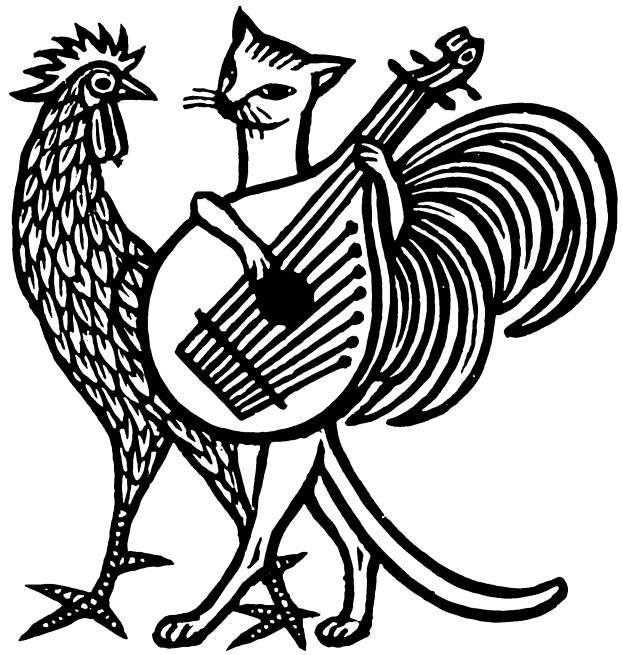
TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Between the reader and the teller of each of these Ukrainian folk tales only two people intervene: the person who recorded the story from a narrator and the translator. Since most of the stories were written down verbatim and since they have been translated into English as exactly as may be, reader and narrator are thus to an unusual degree brought intimately together.

Eight of these stories are from the monumental collection made by Ivan Rudchenko, Ukrainian ethnographer, and published in two volumes in 1869 and 1870 in Kiev, Ukraine. The remaining four are from the collection of Maria Lukiyanenko, Ukrainian historian and teacher, and published in 1947 in Germany. Each gathered the tales from primary sources — "from the lips of the people." Till now, few of the stories in these collections have been translated from the original Ukrainian.

Like many folk tales, these animal stories were created by adults purely for their own entertainment and not, as with fables, for the purpose of demonstrating some moral truth or nugget of human wisdom. Children, too, have listened to these tales of the antic world of talking animals, and, being connoisseurs, have found them quite to their taste.

— MARIE HALUN BLOCH



THE CAT AND THE CHANTICLEER

There were once a cat and a chanticleer and they lived together. The cat hunted and the chanticleer kept house.

The cat was going into the woods one day and so he said to the chanticleer, "Lock yourself in the house, and when the fox comes, don't answer. She'll think that you're not at home and will go away. But if you answer, she'll break through the window and eat you up. So don't answer!"

"Very well," said the chanticleer.

As soon as the cat had gone, the fox came running up to the window and called, "Chanticleer! Cousin dear! Open up!"

The chanticleer forgot the cat's instructions and said, "To-o-o-k, tok-tok-tok-tok! The cat has forbidden it."

At once the fox broke through the window, snatched the chanticleer in her teeth, and ran off.

The chanticleer sang out:

"Pussy dear! Brother dear!
The fox is taking me
Beyond the green woodlands,
Over the yellow sands,
Beyond the rapid waters,
Over the lofty mountains!
Pussy dear! Brother dear!
Set me free!"

The cat was not yet far off. He heard, and at once came running. He caught up with the fox, freed the chanticleer, gave the fox a good beating, and brought the chanticleer home.

Again the cat instructed the chanticleer, "When the fox comes, don't answer. She'll think you're not at home and will go away. But if you answer, she'll break through the window again and make off with you. And now I am going a long way off. If you should cry out, I would no longer hear you."

The cat mended the window and then left. The chanticleer locked the door after him. He had no sooner settled on the perch for a nap, when the fox began calling at the window, "Chanticleer! Cousin dear! Open up!"

The chanticleer kept silent.

"Do open up! What are you afraid of? I was only having a little joke with you. I won't touch you, but only gather up some live coals, for I have nothing to start a fire with in my stove. Open up!"

The chanticleer forgot himself and said, "To-o-o-k, tok-tok-tok-tok! The cat has forbidden it."

Hearing the chanticleer within, the fox broke through the window, snatched him in her teeth, and ran off.

The cock screamed:

"Pussy dear! Brother dear!
The fox is taking me
Beyond the green woodlands,
Over the yellow sands,
Beyond the rapid waters,
Over the lofty mountains!
Pussy dear! Brother dear!
Set me free!"

The cat did not hear.

Once more, the chanticleer screamed:

"Pussy dear! Brother dear!
The fox is taking me
Beyond the green woodlands,
Over the yellow sands,
Beyond the rapid waters,
Over the lofty mountains!
Pussy dear! Brother dear!
Set me free!"

This time, the cat heard, and although he was far away, he caught up with the fox. He rescued the chanticleer and brought him home.

Now the cat flew into a rage. "You! Fool!" he cried. "If you answer, the fox will eat you up. I am now going a very long way off and should you call, I won't hear. Don't answer her!"

"Indeed, I won't answer any more," the chanticleer promised.

The cat mended the window again and went off.

No sooner had he gone than the fox appeared. She sat down under the window and called, "Chanticleer! Cousin dear! Open up!"

Chanticleer kept silent.

The fox said, "Don't play the fool, pretending that you're not at home. I know you're there! Open up!"

Chanticleer held his tongue.

"If you keep silent, it will be all the worse for you. I'll break through the window and eat you up. But if you open the door, I'll only gather up some live coals and leave. Open up!"

Chanticleer could bear it no longer. "To-o-o-k, tok-tok-tok-tok! The cat has forbidden it."

In a trice the fox broke through the window, snatched Chanticleer in her teeth, and dashed off into the woods with him.

Chanticleer screamed:

"Pussy dear! Brother dear!
The fox is taking me
Beyond the green woodlands,
Over the yellow sands,
Beyond the rapid waters,
Over the lofty mountains!
Pussy dear! Brother dear!
Set me free!"

The cat did not hear, for he had already gone far, far off.

Again Chanticleer called.

The cat did not hear.

Chanticleer took a deep breath and with all his might screamed, "Pussy dear! Brother dear! Set me free!"

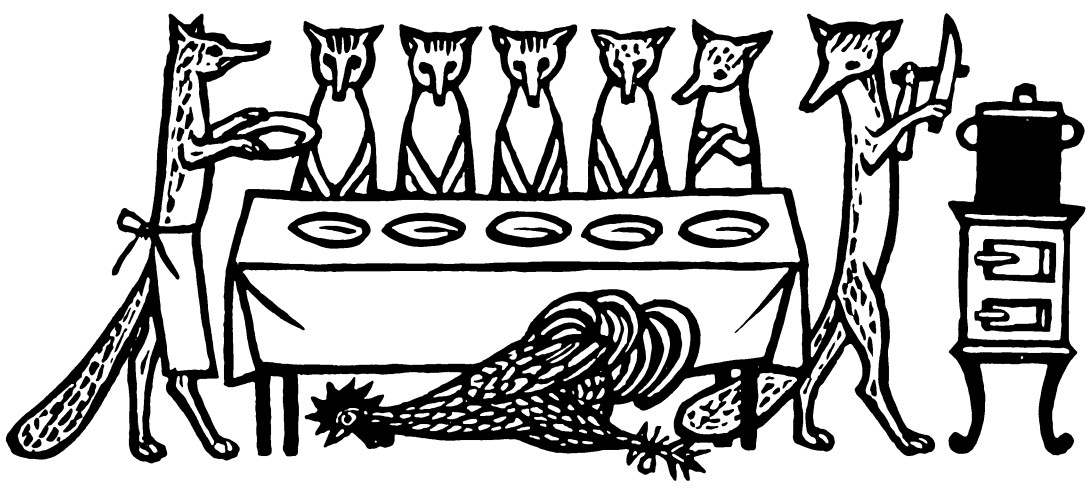
This time the cat heard. Away he dashed in pursuit. But although he ran full tilt, right under his nose the fox jumped into her house with Chanticleer, and slammed the door.

What to do now?

The cat thought, "The fox will gobble up Chanticleer. Alas, poor friend!"

Then the cat went home and dressed himself as a kobzár — a traveling bard. And when it grew dark, he took a hand-embroidered sack and a bandúra and went to the fox's house.

He peeked in through the window. The fire was burning in the stove and a kettle of water was heating. The fox was sharpening a knife and



poor Chanticleer was huddled miserably on the floor, awaiting death.

The cat struck the strings of the bandúra and began to play and sing:

"Oh, tili-lich-ki!
The vixen has four daughters
And a son, Pilipko!
Oh, tili-lich-ki!
Do come out and listen
To my pret-ty sing-ing!"

When the fox's oldest daughter heard this, she said to the fox, "I'll go out, Mama, and see what kobzár that is that plays so beautifully."

"Go and see," said the fox. "But return in a moment, for as soon as the water boils, we'll cut up the chanticleer and put him in the pot."

The oldest daughter stepped out on the porch and the cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with her.

Again he played and sang:

"Oh, tili-lich-ki!
The vixen has four daughters
And a son, Pilipko!
Oh, tili-lich-ki!
Do come out and listen
To my pret-ty sing-ing!"

The next oldest daughter said, "I'll go, too, Mama. I'll see the kobzár for myself and find out why my sister is staying out there so long. Then I'll call her back into the house."

"Go," said the fox, "but return quickly, both of you. The water will soon be boiling and we'll be cutting up the chanticleer for the pot."

The daughter stepped out on the porch. The cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with her.

Once more the cat played and sang:

"Oh, tili-lich-ki!
The vixen has four daughters
And a son, Pilipko!
Oh, tili-lich-ki!
Do come out and listen
To my pret-ty sing-ing!"

The fox said to the third daughter, "Go and call those two — what are they about that they linger so long with the kobzár? We'll soon be cutting up the chanticleer for the pot!"

The third daughter stepped out on the porch. The cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with her.

Then the cat played and sang:

"Oh, tili-lich-ki!
The vixen has four daughters
And a son, Pilipko!
Oh, tili-lich-ki!
Do come out and listen
To my pret-ty sing-ing!"

The fox grew angry. She called to the fourth daughter. "Now, why are those girls chattering idly with the kobzár? Run out and call them. Say that the water is already boiling, that it's time to cut up the chanticleer for the pot. Now mind me, don't you linger out there, too!"

The fourth daughter went out. No sooner did she step out on the porch when the cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with her.

Once more the cat played and sang.

The fox waited and waited. But the daughters did not return. She sent out her son. "You go, Pilipko; send your sisters back into the house. The water is already boiling. It's time to cut up the chanticleer for the pot."

Pilipko ran out on the porch. The cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with him.

Again the cat played and sang.

When Pilipko failed to return, the fox herself jumped out on the porch to see what was so wonderful out there and to chase the children into the house. The cat: TSOK! A blow on the head, into the hand-embroidered sack, and under the bench with her.

Then the cat went into the house, picked up the chanticleer, and gathered up all of the fox's belongings. And so the cat and the chanticleer went home together and lived happily ever after.

For them, sackcloth and laughter and for us — laughter and prosperity!

THE BILLY GOAT AND THE SHEEP

There were once a man and his wife and they had a billy goat and a sheep. The sheep wandered off by herself to graze and became entangled in some hop vines.

Along came the billy goat. "Pull me out!" the sheep begged him.

Heeding her, the goat went and took a stand in front of her. He pulled and pulled and she pushed and pushed, until she was free.

Then they played follow-the-leader. The goat splashed through a mud puddle and the sheep splashed through a mud puddle. The goat

crashed through the wattle fence and the sheep crashed through the wattle fence. The goat jumped into the cabbage patch and the sheep jumped into the cabbage patch.

The man saw what mischief the animals were up to. He took some twigs, caught the sheep in the cabbage patch, and began to beat her. He beat her until she bawled. Then he opened the gates and chased both the sheep and the goat out into the road, saying, "Take yourselves off, both of you — and God be with you! Don't let me see you in my yard again."

So the billy goat and the sheep swore eternal friendship, sewed themselves a sack, and off they went. They walked and they walked.

In the middle of a field they came upon a wolf's head. Now the sheep was strong, but not bold. And the billy goat was bold, but not strong. He said, "Sheep, you pick up the head, for you are strong."

"Okh, you take it, Billy Goat, for you are bold."

They picked the wolf's head up together and thrust it into their sack. They walked and they walked till they saw a fire burning in the distance.

"Let's go there," the billy goat said. "We'll spend the night by the fire so that the wolves won't eat us up."

When they reached the fire what should they see but three wolves sitting around it, cooking porridge.

"Ah, good health, bold lads!" cried the billy goat.

"Ah, good day, brothers, good day!" the shaggiest of the wolves replied. "The kasha hasn't come to a boil yet — so we'll make a meal of you . . ."

Okh, the sheep was struck with fear, and the goat had long before

begun to tremble. Yet the goat took thought. He said to the sheep, "Just hand me over that wolf's head."

The sheep pulled the wolf's head out of the sack.

"Not that one," said the goat. "Hand over the bigger one."

The sheep dropped the wolf's head back into the sack and then pulled it out again.

"No," the goat said, "hand over the still bigger one."

Okh, now the wolves were struck with fear. Each for himself began to think and scheme how to escape.

Then one of them said, "A fine company, brothers, and the kasha is boiling nicely. But there's nothing to thin it with. I'll go for water."

And off he sneaked, muttering, "Plague take your company!"

Now the second wolf kept thinking and scheming how to make his escape. "Eh, the rascal," he said of the first, "off he went and there he loiters. And still there's nothing to thin the kasha with. Here, I'll take a stick and chase him back like a hound."

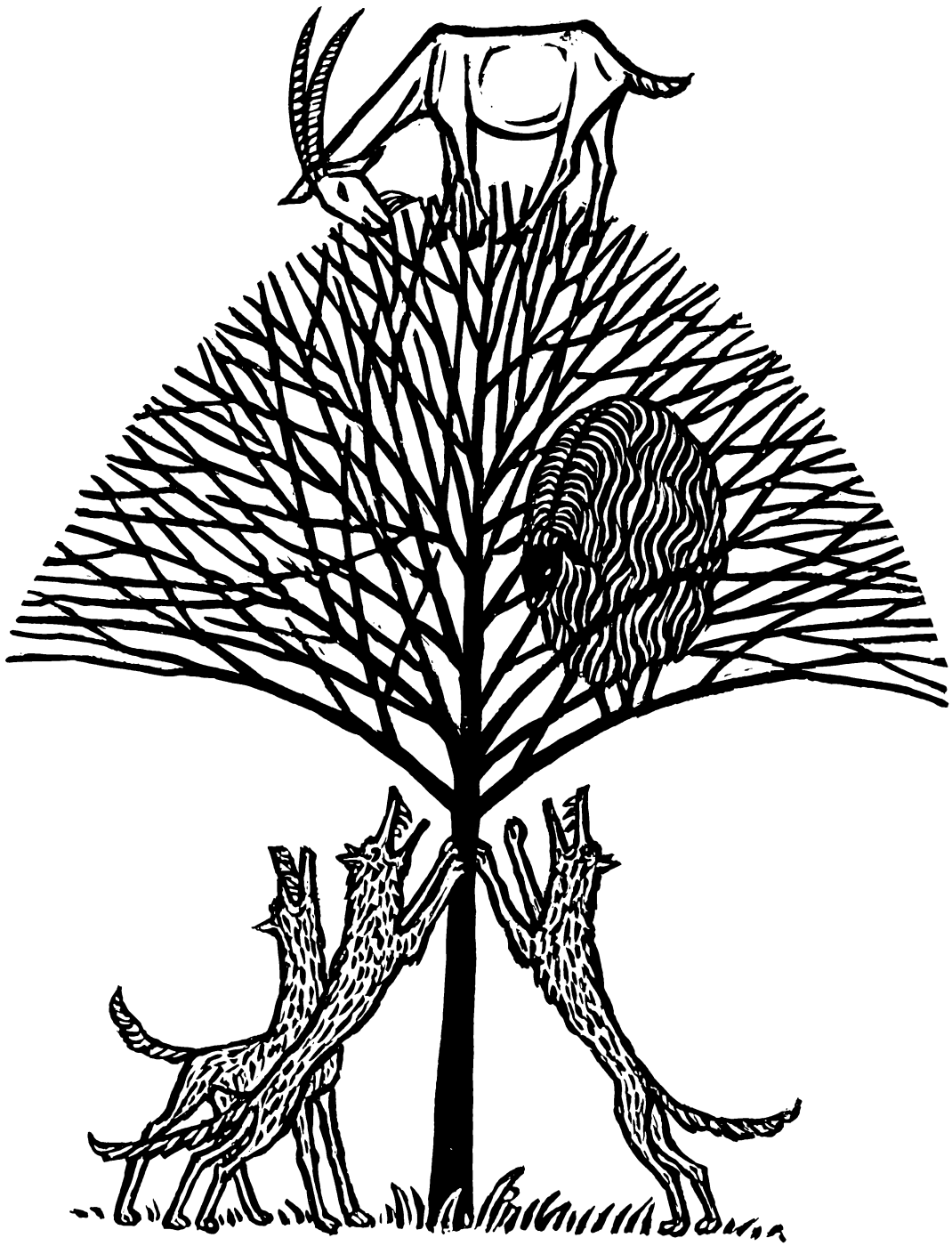
So he, too, sneaked away and did not return. And the third wolf sat and he sat. At last he said, "Here! I'll just go and chase them both back."

And he, too, sneaked off, glad to escape alive.

"Now then, my friend," said the goat to the sheep, "let's make short work of this kasha and then take ourselves off."

Meanwhile, the three wolves sat together at a distance and thought. The first said, "Eh, why should three of us be afraid of a goat and a sheep? Come on — we'll eat the rogues up!"

They went back to the campfire, but the sheep and the goat, having hastily eaten up the kasha, had already slipped off. Away ran the wolves to catch up with them.



They discovered both the goat and the sheep up in an oak tree. The goat, being the bolder, had climbed to the very top. But the sheep remained on a lower branch.

"You're the oldest," two of the wolves said to the shaggiest, "so think of a trick to get them out of the tree."

The shaggy wolf lay down, paws in the air, to see if he could catch sight of the goat and the sheep up in the tree. While he was scheming a trick that would get them down, the sheep sat on her branch and trembled and trembled. And she trembled so hard that at last she fell off, right on top of the shaggy wolf.

The bold goat didn't stop to think twice. "Just hand me up that trickster!" he shouted to the sheep.

At that, the wolves took to their heels and ran for their lives.

And the billy goat and the sheep lived long and happily ever after.

PÁN KOTSKY

A cat came running out of a village and a little fox out of a wood and so they met. The fox looked at the cat and said, "As long as I've lived in the woods, I've never laid eyes on such an animal. Who are you?"

"I am Pán Kotsky!" replied the cat.

"And what sort of creature is Pán Kotsky?" the fox asked.

"I am the most frightful animal in the woods," said the cat. "I tear to pieces whomever I please!"

"Well, marry me," said the fox. "I have a nice house and garden."

The cat agreed and went to live with the fox. They stayed together a week, and another, and the cat never crawled out of the fox's house. Whatever the fox hunted down, she brought to the cat to eat.

One day the rabbit met the fox and said to her, "Little cousin fox, I'm coming to your house to woo you."

But the fox said to him, "Pán Kotsky is at my house now, and he'll tear you to pieces."

The rabbit told the wolf, the bear, and then the wild boar about Pán Kotsky. They met and began to scheme how they might catch a glimpse of him. Finally they said, "We'll prepare a dinner and invite the fox and her Pán Kotsky!"

So they began to talk over who was to go after what. The wolf said, "I'll go after meat to put in the borshch."

And the wild boar said, "I'll go after beets and potatoes."

The bear said, "I'll bring honey for a bite before dinner."

The rabbit said, "And I — cabbage."

So they brought everything and started to cook the meal. When it was cooked, they began to talk over who was to invite Pán Kotsky to the dinner.

The bear said, "I won't be able to run fast enough, should it come to fleeing him."

And the wild boar said, "I, too, am slow."

The wolf said, "I'm already old and a little blind."

Only the rabbit was fit for the task. Away he ran to the fox's lair. The fox noticed that the rabbit was standing on his two hind paws near the hut, so she ran out and asked him, "And what have you come for?"

The rabbit said, "The wolf, the bear, and the wild boar beg — and I beg — that you come to us for dinner with your Pán Kotsky!"

The fox said, "I'll come with him, but you must all hide, for he will tear you to pieces."

The rabbit ran back to the others and announced, "Hide, the fox said, for when Pán Kotsky comes, he'll tear us to pieces."

"But did you tell them to bring their own spoons?" the bear asked.

"Okh, woe is me," said the rabbit. "I quite forgot!"

And off he ran again. He stole up to the fox's window, shouted, "Bring spoons!" and scampered off.

When he had run back to the other animals, they all began to hide. The wild boar hid himself under the table, all but his tail. The bear climbed an oak tree, and the wolf and the rabbit hid under a log.

Then the fox came, leading Pán Kotsky. She led him to the table. When the cat saw the heap of food, he jumped upon the table and began to eat, crying out, "Mya-ru! Mya-ru!"

The other animals thought that he was saying, "More, oh, more!"

"Just listen!" they marveled, each to himself. "He's such a little thing, yet all by himself he's eating up that dinner, which we prepared for all of us — and he wants still more!"

When the cat had eaten his fill, he stretched out on the table. Underneath it, a mosquito bit the wild boar's tail and the boar flicked it. The cat, thinking it was a mouse, leaped down and sank his claws into the boar's tail.

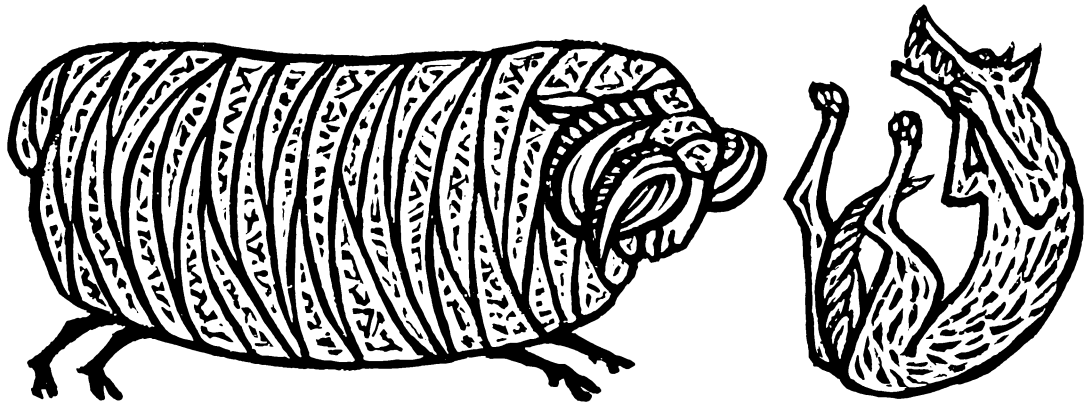
The boar jumped up in terror, ran and struck his snout against the oak tree. The cat became frightened and leaped onto the oak, where the bear was sitting. The bear jumped down upon the log where the wolf and the rabbit were hiding. Then they all took to their heels and fled in four directions.

Afterwards, they came together and talked — all but the rabbit, who had run off who knows where and had not yet returned. The wild boar said, "Well, that was a narrow escape! He grabbed me by the tail and whacked my head against the oak!"

And the bear said, "He seized me by the fur and hurled me from the tree."

And the wolf said, "He jumped on me as I was lying under the log and he took that log and thumped it down on my back. Why, my back still hurts!"

As for Pán Kotsky, he sat in the oak tree for a long time, scared out of his wits, until at last the fox managed to coax him down.



THE POOR WOLF

Now then, there was once such a poor wolf that he was almost dying of hunger. Not a thing could he catch anywhere. So he went to God to beg food.

Before God, he made himself out to be so poor, so very poor that he seemed even worse off than he was. "God," he said, "gracious One! Give me something to eat, otherwise I'll perish of hunger."

"And what do you want to eat?" God asked.

"Give whatever you'll give."

"Over there in the meadow," God said, "the priest's mare is pasturing. She'll certainly not come running to you. Go to her yourself, then, and eat her up."

The wolf quickly took his leave. Trot-trot — how he ran!

To the mare he said, "Good health to you, Mare! God said that I am to eat you."

"What manner of creature are you that you are going to eat me?"

"A wolf!" he said.

"But you're lying — you're a hound!"

"Believe me," he said, "I'm a wolf."

"Well, since you are a wolf and are going to eat me, where will you start?"

"With the head!" he said.

"Eh, little wolf, little wolf!" she said. "If you are indeed going to eat me, begin with my tail. I'll keep grazing all the while and by the time you have eaten your way to the middle I shall have grown fatter still. Then you'll have a satisfying snack."

"So be it!" said the wolf, and straightway made for the mare's tail.

No sooner did he give it a tug than the mare kicked out her heels. She gave the wolf such a smart blow on the muzzle that he no longer knew whether he was in that world or this.

The mare galloped off, raising a cloud of dust behind her. There the wolf sat, thinking, "Am I not foolish? Am I not daft? Why didn't I seize her by the throat?"

Again the wolf dragged himself to God to beg food. "God," he said, "merciful One! Give me at least a little something to eat, otherwise I'll swell from hunger."

"But was the mare," God asked, "really too little for you?"

The wolf began to rant and rail. "May they skin her alive for tobacco pouches!" said he. "It's not only that I didn't have a feast — but she almost smashed my face."

"Well, since that is so," God said, "go over there on the edge of the ravine. A fine fat ram is pasturing there. Go eat him."

The wolf went to the ram pasturing above the ravine. "Good health, Ram!"

"Good health."

"God said that I am to eat you."

"And what manner of creature are you that you are going to eat me?" the ram asked.

"A wolf!"

"But you're lying — you're a hound!"

"No, believe me," he said, "I'm a wolf!"

"Since you are a wolf, then how will you eat me?"

"How am I going to eat you? I'll start with your head — not otherwise! Then you're all mine!"

"Eh, little wolf, little wolf!" said the ram. "Since you have indeed decided to eat me, better stand over there on the edge of the ravine; open your mouth and I will jump into it of my own accord. Go, stand!" he said.

So the wolf stood himself right on the edge of the steep bluff and gaped his jaws wide enough to gulp the ram down in one swallow. The ram backed up, then rushed full tilt at the wolf and butted him square on the forehead.

The wolf flew head over heels into the gully! There he sat, the poor wretch, and cried, "Am I not foolish? Am I not daft? Who ever heard of living meat jumping into one's mouth of itself?"

He thought and he thought. Then again he went to God to beg food. "God," he said, "gracious One! God of mercy! Give whatever you'll give, otherwise I'll perish of hunger."

God said, "What an eater you are! You expect food to jump right into your jaws. Now then, what is to be said to you? Go, there on the road a man has lost some bacon. Let it be yours. It won't run off anywhere."

The wolf listened, then went to the place. And there lay the bacon. He sat down beside it. "Good. I'll eat it," he thought. "But it's salty. I'll be getting thirsty. First I'll go and have a drink and then . . ."

Off he went. While he was drinking from a stream, the man looked about and saw that his bacon was gone. He went back and found it lying on the road. He picked it up and carried it off.

The wolf came back. The bacon was gone.

So he sat and cried, "Am I not foolish? Am I not daft? Who on earth drinks water before eating, anyway?"

He sat and he sat — and how hungry he was! Again he went to God to beg food. "God," he said, "gracious One! God of mercy! Give whatever you'll give, but give me a bite to eat, or I'll not live a lifetime."

"I've already had more than enough of you with your eating," God said. "What now is to be said to you? Go, there not far from the village a pig is feeding — go eat it!"

The wolf went. "Good health, Pig!"

"Good health."

"God said that I am to eat you."

"And what manner of creature are you that you are going to eat me?"

"A wolf!" he said.

"You're lying — you're a hound!"

"No," he said, "a wolf!"

"Is there really, then," the pig asked, "nothing else for wolves to eat?"

"Nothing," he said.

"Since there is nothing," the pig said, "climb on my back. I'll take you to the village. In our village just now they are choosing all kinds of officials — maybe they'll choose you, also. Then you'll have all you want to eat."

"So be it! Take me!"

The wolf sat himself on the pig and the pig went running into the village. She began squealing so loudly that the wolf became frightened. "Why are you screaming so?" he asked.

"I am calling out the people," said the pig, "that they may quickly choose you for an official."

The people came flocking out of their houses with pokers, oven forks, with shovels — with whatever they could lay hands on. The sight took the wolf's very breath away, so terrified was he. Matters were taking a

serious turn! "Tell me," he whispered to the pig, "why are so many people running?"

"Why, they're running for you," she replied.

The people unseated the wolf and began to thwack him and thump him until he lost all his eagerness for pig. He barely escaped alive.

Straight he went to God. "God," he said, "gracious One! God of mercy! Give me any little crumb at all to nibble on, otherwise here and now my life is at an end."

God said, "Go, down there walks a tailor. Fall upon him, and so make the best of it."

Ready to drop of hunger, the wolf cut across the man's path. "Good health, Tailor!"

"Good health."

"God said that I am to eat you."

"And what manner of creature are you, that you are going to eat me?"

"A wolf!" he said.

"You're lying — you're a hound!"

"No," he said, "believe me, I'm a wolf."

"But how small you are!" said the tailor. "Here, I'll measure you."

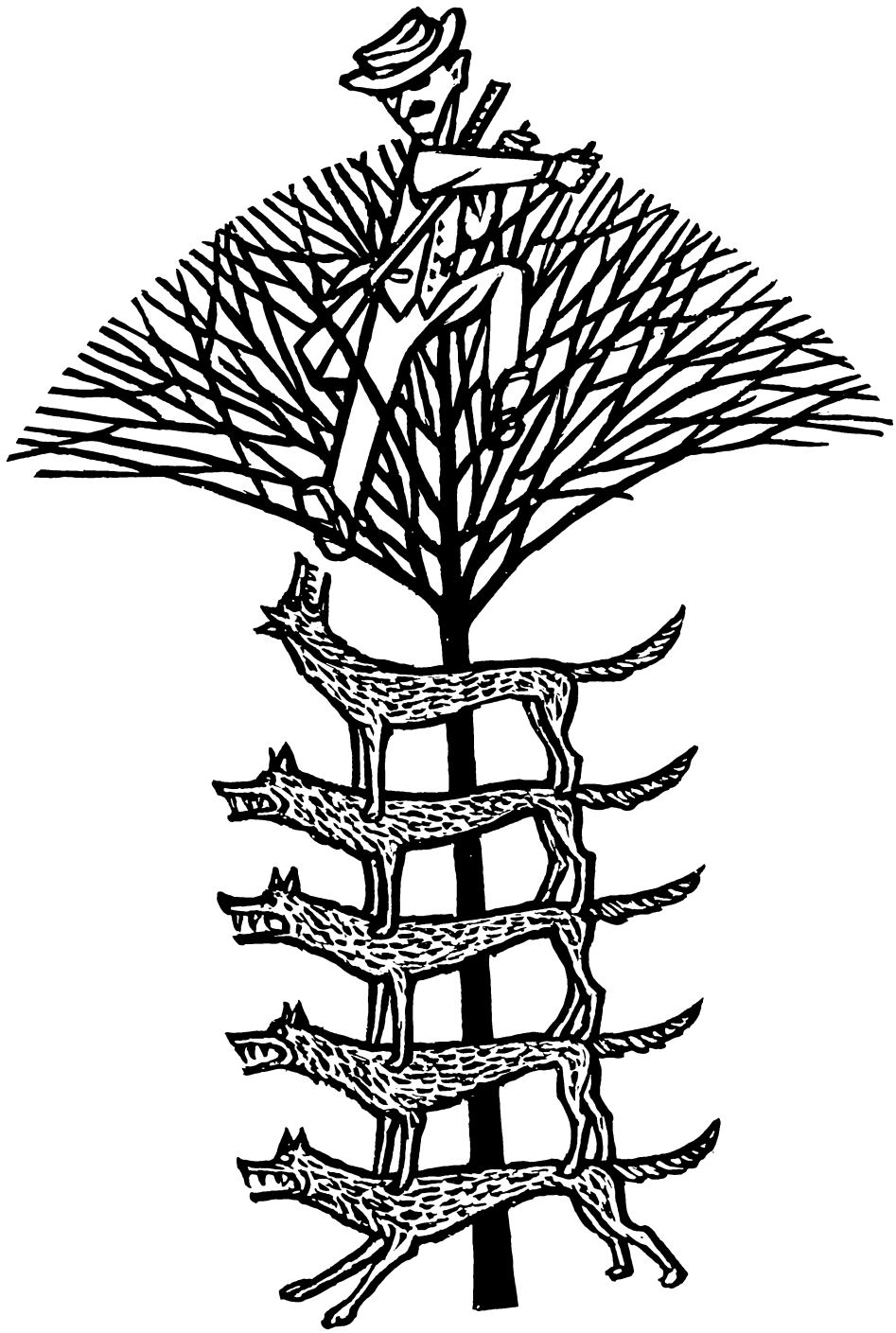
He twisted the wolf's tail in his hand and began to measure. "Length: arshín!" he shouted, pulling the tail. "Width: arshín!"

The wolf knew enough to know that an arshín is a measurement used by tailors. He stood scarcely breathing while the tailor measured.

The man kept measuring and pulling and pulling on the tail until it came right off in his hand. Away ran the wolf. But he had already had enough of going to God. Instead he ran to the wolves.

"Wolves! Brothers! Such-and-such a calamity!"

Away dashed the wolves in pursuit of the tailor. The tailor saw —



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trouble! What in the world to do now? There stood a tree. He made a dash for it and climbed to the very top. The wolves crowded around the tree and clicked their teeth.

The hungry wolf then said, "No, brothers, nothing will come of this. Here's what we'll do: I'll stand under the tree and you climb on me one on top of another until we reach that scurvy tailor."

They climbed one on top another — what a ladder they made! Then the topmost wolf said to the man, "Now then, climb down, scurvy tailor! We're going to eat you!"

"Ah, brother wolves," the man said, "have mercy on me! Don't eat me!"

"No," said the top wolf, "impossible! Climb down!"

"Wait a bit, then," the man said. "At least I'll have a sniff of tobacco once more before my soul rises to heaven."

He sniffed: ah-SHEE!

The bottom wolf — thinking that the tailor was measuring the top wolf and so was shouting ar-shín! — shuddered with fright. With that, all went down. What a heap! The bottom wolf worked himself out from under and took to his heels — and the others after him.

The tailor climbed down from the tree. "Thank you, God," he said, "for not letting a Christian soul fall to savage beasts!"

He went safely home. And so he lives with his young wife and eats knishi.

Here then is your tale — for me a little ear of wheat, but for you a little bag of money.

THE CRANE AND THE FOX

A crane and a fox met in the forest. The crane said, "Take me in for the winter, little fox, and I'll teach you to fly."

"Very well," said the fox.

The fox took him in, and so they lived in the fox's lair.

But one day some hunters found out that in the lair a crane was living with a fox. They began to dig down into the lair.

Said the fox to the crane, "How many ideas have you?"

"Ten," said the crane. "And how many have you?"

"One."

Later the fox again asked the crane, "How many ideas have you?"

"Nine. And how many have you?"

"One."

Still later the fox said, "How many ideas have you?"

"Eight. And how many have you?"

"One."

Thus the fox kept asking the crane and the crane kept giving up his ideas one by one. Still later, when the hunters were already digging close, the fox said, "How many ideas have you?"

"One," the crane replied. "And you?"

"One. What, then, is yours?"

The crane said, "I'll lie down near the entrance of the lair and play dead. They'll pick me up and begin to look me over. Then you flee. They'll make a dash for you — then I'll fly away."

The hunters dug down to the crane, picked it up, and said, "Look! Who would have thought it — the fox has strangled the crane! Now let's lay it aside, for it is already ours. We'll dig deeper till we reach the fox."

No sooner had they said this than the fox dashed out of the lair — fffft! — and ran off into the forest. And the crane — prrrkh! — flew away.

After a while, to find each other, the fox and the crane began calling back and forth through the woods.

The fox called, "Kith!"

And the crane, "Kin!"

The fox called, "Kith!"

And the crane, "Kin!"

Then the fox cried, "Ho!"

For they had come together.

"Now," the fox said, "by our agreement you must teach me to fly, for I took you in for the winter."

"Very well," said the crane. "Climb on my back."

The fox sat herself on the crane. Into the air the crane flew. And when he had flown as high as a housetop, he let the fox fall to the ground.

"How now?" the crane called down. "Is it good to fly?"

"Good!"

The crane flew down to the fox and said, "Climb on my back again."

Again the fox climbed upon the crane's back. Again the crane flew up as high as a housetop, let the fox go, and then called down, "Is it good to fly?"

"Good."

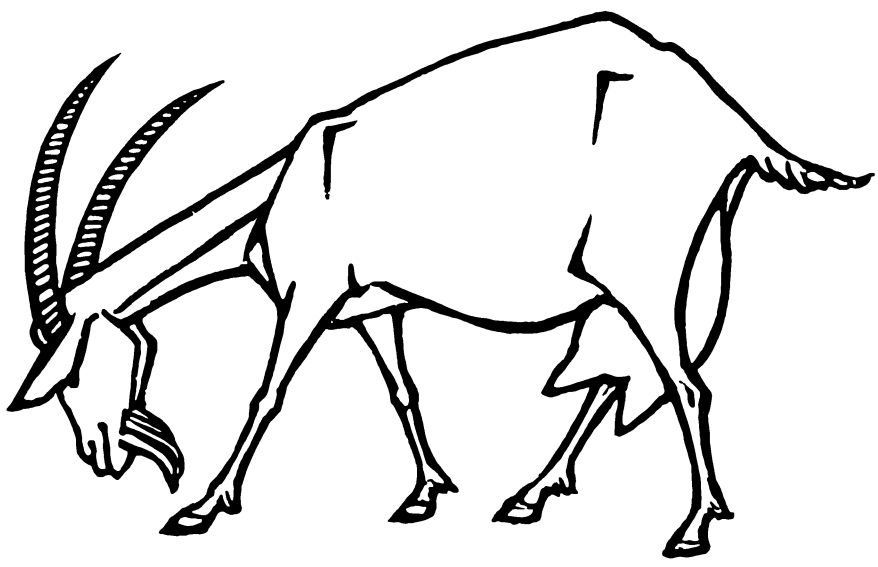
"Now climb on my back once more."

The fox climbed on and away flew the crane — so high that no eye could see. As they were flying over a lake, once more the crane let the fox fall.

"And now," he called down, "is it good to fly?"

The fox did not answer. She was swimming her way to shore.

"Quits!" the crane called, and away he flew.



THE SPITEFUL NANNY GOAT

There once lived a man and wife. One day the man rode off to the fair and bought a goat. When he had brought it home, he sent his older son to pasture it.

The lad tended the goat all the day and in the evening drove it homeward. When he reached the yard, there at the gates stood the old man, in red boots and holding a stick.

"My dear little nanny goat, my pretty little nanny goat!" the old man said. "Have you drunk? Have you eaten?"

"No, granddad," the goat said. "I did not drink nor did I eat. I snatched some leaves of a maple as I ran across the bridge and sipped a drop of water as I ran across the dam. Only that much did I drink. Only that much did I eat!"

So the old man seized his son and gave him a thrashing.

The next day he sent his younger son to pasture the goat. In the evening, as the lad was driving the goat through the gates, there stood the old man in his red boots, holding a stick.

The old man said, "My pretty little nanny goat, have you drunk? Have you eaten?"

"No, granddad. I did not drink nor did I eat. I snatched some leaves of maple as I ran across the bridge and sipped a drop of water as I ran across the dam. Only that much did I drink. Only that much did I eat."

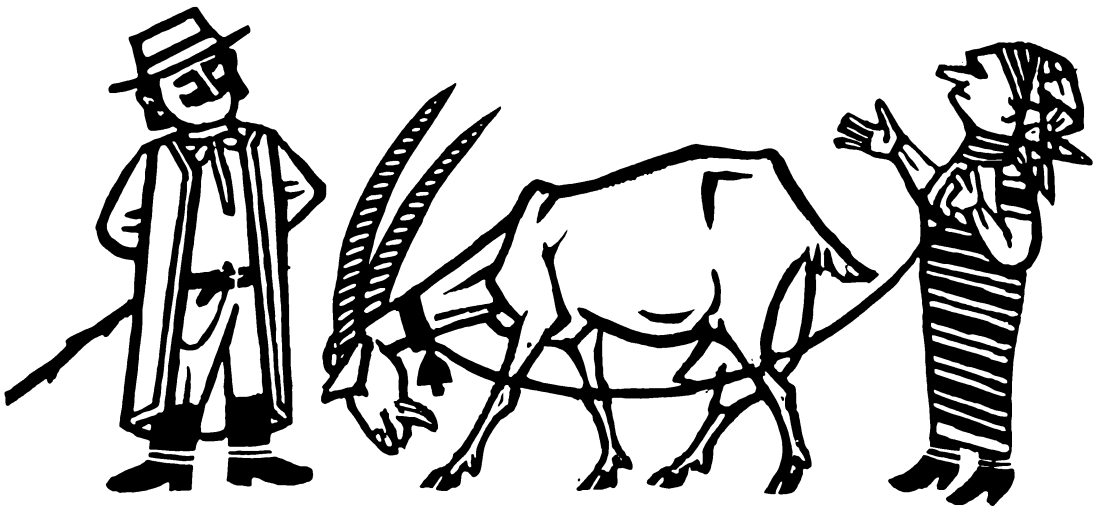
So the old man gave his younger son a thrashing.

The third day he sent his wife to pasture the goat. She pastured it all the day and in the evening drove it toward the farmyard. The old man was already standing at the gates, in his red boots and holding a stick. He asked, "My pretty little nanny goat, my dear little nanny goat, have you drunk? Have you eaten?"

"No, granddad. I did not drink nor did I eat. I snatched some leaves of maple as I ran across the bridge and sipped a drop of water as I ran across the dam. Only that much did I drink. Only that much did I eat."

So the old man gave the old woman a thrashing, too.

The fourth day the old man himself took the goat to pasture. And in the evening, as soon as he had driven the goat into the road homeward, he himself went ahead and took his stand at the gates. There he stood in his red boots, and he asked, "My pretty little nanny goat, my dear little nanny goat, have you drunk? Have you eaten?"



"No, granddad. I did not drink nor did I eat. I snatched some leaves of maple as I ran across the bridge and sipped a drop of water as I ran across the dam. Only that much did I drink. Only that much did I eat."

Well, with that the old man flew into a rage. He went to the blacksmith to have his knife tempered and sharpened that he might kill the goat. But in the meantime the goat took to her heels and ran off to the woods.

She skipped into a fox's house, jumped up on the stove and said:

"I am a spiteful nanny goat,
Clothed in shabby wool
And bought for a mere three coins.
I'll stamp you, stamp you with my feet,
Toss you, toss you with my horns,
Sweep you outdoors with my tail,
Then trample you beneath my hoofs!"

The little fox had never seen nor heard of such an animal. She became frightened and ran out of the hut. And she sat down under an oak tree and wept.

Along came a wolf. The little fox cried and she begged, saying, "Dear brother wolf! There's a strange and savage beast in my house. Drive it out for me."

The wolf stepped into the house and said, "Who is here in the fox's house?"

The goat said:

"I am a spiteful nanny goat,
Clothed in shabby wool
And bought for a mere three coins.
I'll stamp you, stamp you with my feet,
Toss you, toss you with my horns,
Sweep you outdoors with my tail,
Then trample you beneath my hoofs!"

The wolf became frightened and ran out of the hut.

So again the fox sat under the oak tree and wept. Along came a lion. The fox said to him, "Dear brother lion! There's a strange and savage beast in my house. Drive it out for me."

So the lion went into the house and asked, "Who is here in the fox's hut?"

The goat said:

"I am a spiteful nanny goat,
Clothed in shabby wool
And bought for a mere three coins.

I'll stamp you, stamp you with my feet,
Toss you, toss you with my horns,
Sweep you outdoors with my tail,
Then trample you beneath my hoofs!"

The lion, too, became frightened and ran out.

Again the fox went and sat under the oak tree and wept. Along came a cock. The fox said, "Dear brother chanticleer! There's a strange and savage beast in my house. Drive it out for me."

So the cock went into the house, flapped his wings, and crowed:

"Koo-koo-ree-koo!
I strut on legs in handsome boots
And carry a sharp scythe.
So climb down from that stove, old goat,
Or off comes your hide!"

The goat became so frightened that she fell to the floor and was killed.

And then the cock came to live with the little fox and they lived long and they lived prosperously together.

SEERKO

In a farmyard there once lived a dog named Seerko. So long as he was young and healthy, his master fed him. But when he became old and toothless, the master turned him out of the yard.

The dog went into the forest, lay down under an oak tree, and gave himself up to die. Along came a wolf. He asked, "Why are you lying here, Dog?"

"I came to die," the dog replied. "So long as I was healthy, I served the master faithfully. But now that I have grown old, they've turned me out of the farmyard to die of hunger."

"If you like," said the wolf, "I'll teach you how to win back your master's favor. Only, afterwards, don't forget about me."

"Teach me," the dog said, "and I'll repay you."

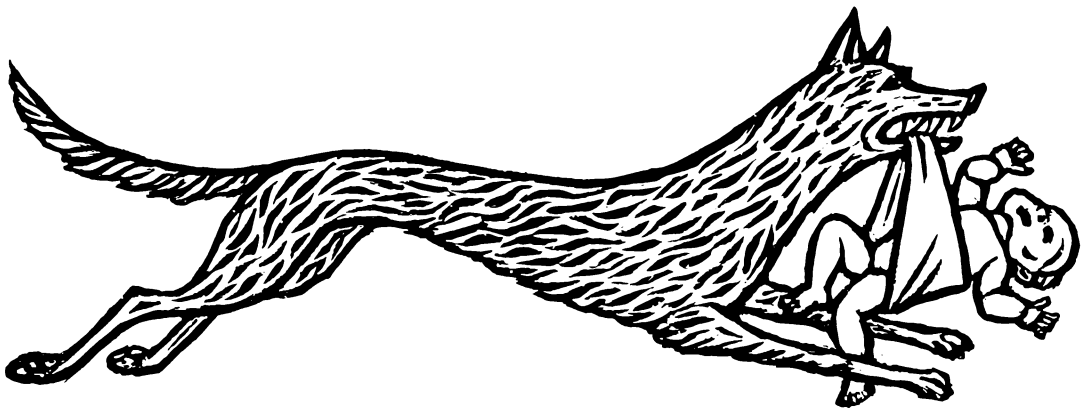
"Listen, then," the wolf said. "Soon harvesting will begin. Your master and his wife will go to the fields and will take their infant with them. While the child lies in the shade of a stack of grain, they will reap. I'll sneak up, seize the child, and carry it off to the woods. But you jump across my path, take away the child, and bring it to its parents. Thus they will prize you again."

The dog thanked the wolf and began waiting for harvest time. Though he barely kept from starving, somehow he lived through the lean days.

Then the time for harvest came and everything happened just as the wolf said. The master and his wife went into the fields and took the child with them. They placed the child underneath a little bush, and themselves began to reap.

The wolf sneaked up, seized the child and carried it away across the fields. The master and mistress saw and began to shout and run after him. But how is it possible to catch up with a wolf?

The wolf had already reached the wood when Seerko jumped out across his path and rushed for him. When he leaped upon the wolf, the wolf dropped the child and rushed for Seerko. They rolled on the



ground, pretending to bite each other, and then the wolf broke loose and made a dash for the woods.

Seerko picked up the child and carried it to the master. What outcries and tears! What babble and joy!

"See," the wife said, "I told you that Seerko is still a good dog. You didn't listen to me, but turned him out. Yet he overpowered the wolf and rescued the child from him. Now I won't allow Seerko to be driven away again. To the end of his days I'm going to feed him, even though he grows quite useless."

"Good," the master replied. "I myself would not drive him away now."

So the dog returned to the farmyard. They fed him well and looked after him, so that he became fat and sleek and regained his strength.

But the wolf's lot was different. So long as it was warm, he managed to find prey. But as late autumn drew near, he became hungry and cold.

The dog did not forget him, however. Every day he carried a bit of something to the field, a scrap of bread or a bone of some sort.

At last the master and mistress finished the threshing and began to prepare for the christening of their child. The dog said to the wolf, "My masters are preparing a christening party. When they have drunk well, I will let you into the house on the sly, and you can eat your fill. Only be sure to keep silent, so that they don't discover you by your voice."

The wolf promised to hold his tongue. In the evening he approached the house. And when the people opened the door into the corridor to cool off a bit in the fresh air, Seerko led the wolf into the house and settled him under the table. Then he began to bring him food. The house was full of people, and no one noticed what Seerko was doing.

The wolf ate his fill, until he could not stuff another bite. Then he said to Seerko, "I'm thirsty. Bring me what the people are drinking."

Seerko brought a bottle of wine under the table. When the wolf had drunk it up, how muddled he was! "Oh, I can't restrain myself!" he said to the dog. "I'm going to sing!"

"Don't sing!" said the dog. "There'll be trouble!"

The wolf held back, held back, and then suddenly burst into a howl.

Hullabaloo broke out in the cottage. "Beat the wolf!" everyone shouted, snatching at sticks and pokers.

Seerko snarled and rushed under the table. He leaped upon the wolf's back, caught him by the neck in his teeth as if to bite him, and at the same time pushed him toward the door.

The master said, "Don't beat the wolf, for you'll kill my dog. Never fear! Seerko knows what to do!"

The guests fell back, and Seerko worked the wolf toward the door, then into the courtyard, and out into the fields. He drew the wolf right into the woods. Then Seerko said, "You did me a kindness. Now I have done you one."

And so they parted.

When Seerko returned to the cottage they treated him to delicacies, and praised him for overpowering the wolf. And so he lived happily till his death.

HOW THE LITTLE FOX WENT AFTER CHAFF

A little fox was on her way to gather chaff when she ran a sliver into her foot. She walked along groaning, "Oh, my little foot hurts! Oh, my little foot hurts!"

And then the dark night began to chill her. She looked about — and there stood a hut. She walked up to the door and knocked: Stuk! Stuk!

"Who is there?" the people asked from within.

"I am little cousin fox."

"And what, little cousin fox, do you want?"

"Let me in, good people, to spend the night."

"Oh, little cousin fox! Our hut is small and crowded. There's not even a place to make up a bed for you."

"Eh, good people! I'll make my bed under the bench, wrap myself in my tail, and somehow pass the night."

"Well, in that case, come in," the people said.

And they let the fox into the house. She lay down under the bench and began groaning, "Oh, my little foot! Oh, my little foot!"

The master of the house heard and asked, "What troubles you, little fox?"

"I was going after chaff and ran a sliver into my little foot."

"Let me pull it out."

"Eeee-eeee, I don't want to! It will hurt!"

"Don't be afraid. I'll just take a look at it."

The master looked at the fox's foot, took hold of the sliver, and so pulled it out.

"Oh!" screamed the fox. "What did you do?"

"I took out the sliver," the master said. "So — your little foot doesn't hurt any more?"

"It doesn't hurt," the fox admitted.

"See, little silly? And you were so afraid!"

"Now show me my sliver," the fox said.

"It's gone," said the master. "I've already thrown it into the stove."

Now what a clamor the fox raised! "The only sliver I owned," she yelped, "and that they threw into the stove! Give it back!"

"But what do you need it for, little fox?"

"I need it! Give it back!"

"But how can I when it's already burned up?"

"Well, if you won't give me back my sliver, give me a hen instead," the fox said.

"Have you gone daft, fox? By what rule should I give you a hen for a sliver?"

"Well, then, give me back my sliver!"

What can you do with such a wicked fox? The whole night through the master and mistress went to great pains trying to calm her. In vain. So in the morning the angry master gave a hen to the fox and told her to take herself out of the house.

The fox took the hen and went dancing along, singing, "Oh, how clever I am! I traded a sliver for a hen!"

And thus she went along until the dark night began to chill her. She looked about to see where she might spend the night. There stood a hut. She went up to the door: Stuk! Stuk!

"Who's there?"

"I, little cousin fox."

"What do you want?"

"Let me in, good people, to spend the night."

"Oh, little cousin fox, our hut is small and crowded. There's no place to make up a bed for you."

"Eh, good people, I'll make my bed under the bench, wrap myself in my tail, and somehow spend the night."

"Well, in that case, come in," the people said.

The fox entered the house and asked, "Where can I put my hen?"

"So you have a hen? Then put her out in the corridor along with our ducks."

"But what if your ducks eat up my hen?" the fox said.

"Go along with you! Foolish! Where did you ever hear of ducks eating hens?"

"Mind! If my hen disappears, I'll take one of your ducks in return."

"Fear not. Sleep peacefully!" the master and mistress said.

Everyone in the cottage fell asleep. But the fox got up, went out into the corridor, ate her hen, and scattered the feathers all about. She licked herself clean, smartened herself, lay down under the bench, and fell fast asleep.

In the morning she woke and began to look for her hen. "Oh, woe! Where is my little hen? Look! Your ducks have eaten up my hen and her feathers are scattered about the corridor. And you said that ducks don't eat chickens! Now give me a duck for my hen!"

She raised such a wailing that the master gave her a duck and hustled her out of the house. "If that's the way you are," he said, "go off with you, whither you please!"

Off went the fox, dancing with glee and singing, "Oh, how clever I am! I traded a sliver for a hen and the hen for a duck!"

Thus she went along until again the dark night overtook her. She looked about and there stood a hut. She went to the window: Stuk! Stuk!

"Who's there?"

"I, little cousin fox."

"What do you want?"

"Let me in, good people, to spend the night."

"Oh, little cousin fox! Our hut is small and crowded. There's nowhere to make up a bed for you!"

"Eh, good people, I'll make my bed under the bench, wrap myself in my tail, and somehow pass the night."

"Well, in that case, come in," the people said.

The fox entered and asked, "Where shall I put my duck?"

"So you have a duck with you, too? Then put her in the barn among the geese — let her spend the night there."

"I'm afraid to. Your geese will eat up my duck," the fox said.

"Who ever heard of geese eating ducks?"

"Mind!" the fox said. "If my duck disappears I'll take one of your geese in return."

They went to bed and when everyone had fallen asleep, the fox very quietly let herself out of the house and stole to the barn. She took and ate the duck, and scattered the feathers among the geese. Then she returned to the cottage and fell fast asleep under the bench.

At break of day she rose, ran to the barn, and promptly raised a clamor. "Help! The duck has vanished! I told you the geese would eat her! Look, all the geese are walking about in duck feathers. Now give me a goose in return for my duck."

And she kept up her yelping until the people gave her a goose and turned her out of the house.

Off she went into the woods, as pleased as pleased could be. She danced along, singing, "Oh, how clever I am! I traded a sliver for a hen, the hen for a duck, the duck for a goose! Oh, how clever I am!"

Thus she went along until the dark night overtook her. Again she spied a house and knocked: Stuk! Stuk!

"Who's there?"

"I, little cousin fox. Good people, let me in to spend the night."

"Oh, little cousin fox, our hut is small and crowded. There's not even room to make up a bed for you."

"Eh, good people, I'll make my bed under the bench, wrap myself in my tail, and somehow spend the night."

"Well, in that case, come in," the people said.

And they let her into the house. The fox greeted them and then asked where she might put her goose for the night.

Where to put her, indeed? The people gave this some thought. "Perhaps in the stall with the lambs?" they said.

"But suppose the lambs eat up my goose?" the fox warned.

"But do lambs really eat geese?" the master said. "No one has ever heard of such a thing. Don't babble nonsense, cousin fox. Just get ready for bed."

"Mind! If your lambs eat up my goose, I'll take a lamb in her place," the fox said.

Everyone lay down and went to sleep. But in the middle of the night the fox did away with the goose, just as she had with the hen and the duck. She ate up the flesh and scattered the down and feathers among

the lambs. Then she licked herself clean, smartened herself, returned to the hut, curled up in a ball under the bench, and fell fast asleep.

And in the morning, as usual, she raised an uproar. "My goose has vanished! The lambs have eaten her! Look, they're walking about in down! Now give me a lamb for my goose!"

And she kept up her yelping until she had wheedled a lamb from the people.

Then she left the house and away she went, singing her own praise again. "Oh, how clever I am! I traded a sliver for a hen, the hen for a duck, the duck for a goose, and the goose — for no less than a lamb! Oh, how clever!"

In this merry way the day passed. When the dark night began to overtake the fox she looked about — and there stood a cottage. She knocked on the door: Stuk! Stuk!

"Who's there?"

"Little cousin fox."

"What do you want?"

"Let me in, good people, to spend the night."

"Oh, little cousin fox, our hut is small and crowded. There's not even room to make up a bed for you!"

"Eh, good people, I'll make my bed under the bench, wrap myself in my tail, and somehow pass the night."

"Well, in that case, come in," the people said.

The fox entered and asked leave to put the lamb in the corridor. The master agreed, and all lay down to sleep. In the night the fox killed the lamb, ate a little of the meat and buried the rest outdoors. Then she slept peacefully under the bench till morning.

And in the morning, as usual, she began to look for the lamb, and

then to scream that during the night someone had let it out of the corridor.

"But no one left the house during the night," the people said.

"Except your daughter-in-law, when at dawn she went out to milk the cows," the fox said.

The daughter-in-law vowed that she had not let out the lamb, and indeed had not seen it in the corridor. But the fox would not even listen. What a clamor she raised! "Give back the lamb! And if the lamb is gone, then give me your daughter-in-law instead!"

The people began to lament. "But how can we give up our daughter-in-law to you? Our son will mourn for her!"

They offered a piglet for the lamb. But the fox would take nothing less than the daughter-in-law.

"Very well," the people said. "Only we'll put her in a sack for you. Otherwise, how will you carry her?"

So while the fox was still in the house, they caught the sturdy dog Seerko, thrust him into a sack, tied the sack, and handed it to the fox. "Here, take it!" they said. "And be off, since you are so hardhearted."

Away went the fox, gloating and boasting, "Oh, how clever I am! I traded a sliver for a hen, the hen for a duck, the duck for a goose, the goose for a lamb, and the lamb — for the daughter-in-law!"

Gleefully the fox tossed the sack into the air, crying, "Do you hear me, daughter-in-law?"

From within, Seerko replied, "How! How-ooo!"

"Why is it, daughter-in-law, that you sound like a dog?" the fox asked.

And again she sang her song of self-praise. "Oh, how clever I am! I

traded a sliver for a hen, the hen for a duck, the duck for a goose, the goose for a lamb, and the lamb — for the daughter-in-law!"

Again the fox tossed the sack into the air. "Do you hear me, daughter-in-law? Come, join me in my song!"

"How! How-ooo!" Seerko answered from within.

At that, curiosity seized the fox. Why did the girl keep howling like a dog? The fox started to untie the sack to look inside.

Out jumped Seerko and leaped for the fox. The fox took to her heels and Seerko after her. The fox ran and ran until she was out of breath. But right under Seerko's nose she jumped into a hole.

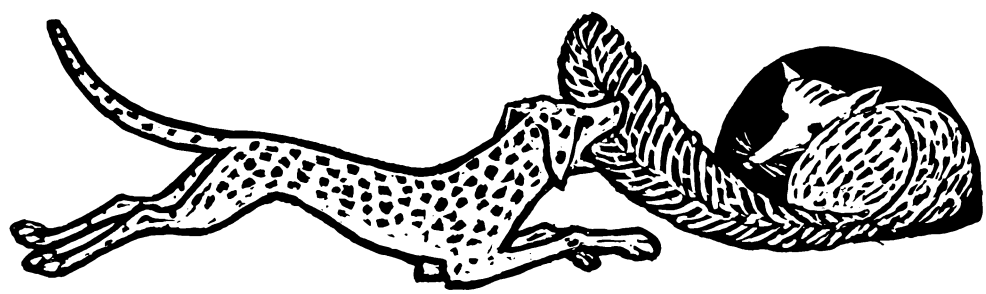
She sat in the hole, catching her breath. Then she said, "Eyes of mine, oh, eyes of mine, what were you doing while Seerko-Beelko was chasing after me, and was about to catch up and tear my golden furry coat to tatters?"

"We, little fox, kept watching the road so that you wouldn't trip and fall, so that Seerko-Beelko wouldn't catch up and tear your golden furry coat to tatters."

"So, my darling eyes, I'll buy you some spectacles! And you, my ears, what were you doing while Seerko-Beelko was chasing after me and was about to catch up and tear my golden furry coat to tatters?"

"We, little fox, kept listening: Is Seerko-Beelko far off? We took care that he'd not catch up and tear your golden furry coat to tatters."

"So, my darling ears, I'll buy you some earrings. And you, my pretty little feet, what were you doing while Seerko-Beelko was chasing after



me and was about to catch up and tear my golden furry coat to tatters?"

"We, little fox, ran with all our might so that Seerko-Beelko wouldn't catch up and tear your golden furry coat to tatters."

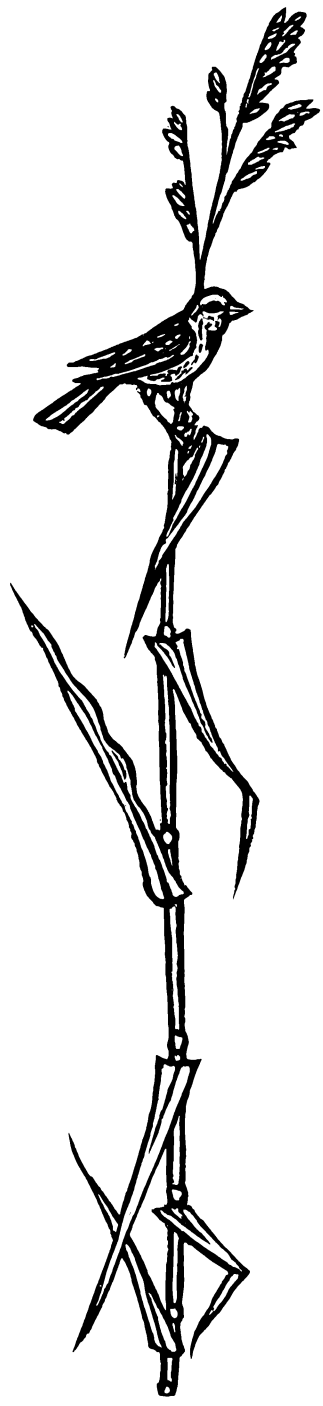
"So, my pretty little feet, I'll buy you some little red slippers. And you, my bushy tail, what were you doing?"

"I, cousin fox, kept tangling myself among your legs. I wanted you to trip and fall so that Seerko-Beelko would catch up and tear your golden furry coat to tatters after all."

"Ah, so that's the kind you are! Well, then, I'll give you over to Seerko-Beelko. Here, Seerko-Beelko! Here! Bite off the tip of this tail!"

And the fox thrust her tail out of the hole like a plume. Seerko-Beelko snapped it in his teeth, pulled out the fox, and tore her to tatters.

THE SPARROW AND THE STALK OF GRASS



A sparrow flew down upon a stalk of grass and said, "Rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The grass said, "I don't want to!"

"I'll go for the goat," the sparrow said. "Come, goat, come and nibble the grass, for the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The goat said, "I don't want to!"

"I'll go for the wolf," the sparrow said. "Come, wolf, eat the goat. The goat won't nibble the grass and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The wolf said, "I don't want to."

So the sparrow went to the people. "Come, people," he said, "thrash the wolf. The wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The people said, "We don't want to."

"Then I'll go for the Tatárs," said the sparrow. "Tatárs! Tatárs! Go cut down the people. The people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

But the Tatárs said, "We don't want to."

"I'll go for fire," the sparrow said. "Come, fire, burn the Tatárs! For the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

But the fire said, "I don't want to."

"I'll go for water," the sparrow said. "Come, water, quench the fire, for the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

But the water said, "I don't want to."

"I'll go for the oxen," the sparrow said. "Oxen, oxen! Come drink the water, for the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

But the oxen did not want to.

"I'll go for a stick," the sparrow said. "Come, stick, beat the oxen.

For the oxen won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The stick said, "I don't want to!"

So the sparrow went to the worms. "Come, worms," he said, "gnaw the stick. For the stick won't beat the oxen, the oxen won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The worms did not want to.

"I'll go for the hens," the sparrow said. "Come, hens, eat the worms! For the worms won't gnaw the stick, the stick won't beat the oxen, the oxen won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

But the hens said, "We don't want to."

"I'll go for the hawk," the sparrow said. "Come, hawk, seize the hens! For the hens won't eat the worms, the worms won't gnaw the stick, the stick won't beat the oxen, the oxen won't drink the water, the water won't quench the fire, the fire won't burn the Tatárs, the Tatárs won't cut down the people, the people won't thrash the wolf, the wolf won't eat the goat, the goat won't nibble the grass, and the grass won't rock the good little sparrow for a while."

The hawk went after the hens, the hens for the worms, the worms for the stick, the stick for the oxen, the oxen for the water, the water for the fire, the fire for the Tatárs, the Tatárs for the people, the people for the wolf, the wolf for the goat, the goat for the grass, and the grass began to sway and sing:

"Rockabye, rockabye, bad little sparrow —
A hundred mishaps to all of your kind-o!"

THE FARMER, THE BEAR, AND THE FOX

One day a man went out to his field to plow. He plowed and plowed, when suddenly a bear came out of the wood. The bear went up to the man and said, "Look here, I'm going to eat your ox."

The man cried, "Then what will I plow with?" He began to beg, "Let me at least finish this furrow."

"Very well, then, finish it."

The bear lay down on the man's cart and there he stayed. As the man was plowing to the end of the furrow, out of the wood came a fox.

"What is that lying on your cart, Man?" the fox asked.

"It's a bear," the man said. "And woe is me! As soon as I finish this furrow, he's going to eat my ox. Then what will I plow with?"

"Say it's a log," the fox said in a low voice.

"It's not a bear — it's a log," the man said.

"Eh," said the fox loudly, "if it were a log, then it would be tied on." And off she ran.

Then the bear said, "Tie me to the cart so that I will look like a log."

The man took a rope, wound it around the bear, and tied him fast to the cart. Again the fox came running. "Man, what is that lying on your cart?"

"A log."

"If it were a log," the fox said, "then an ax would be thrust into it." And off she ran.

So the bear said, "Thrust an ax into me."

The man took an ax, struck the bear, and killed him.

Once more the fox came running. "Now then," she said, "what will you give me for saving your ox?"

"Come home with me," the man said. "I'll give you three hens."

"Eh, I'll not go to your house. Bring them to me here."

The man went home, put three hens in a sack, and his dog as well, and went back to the fox. "Come here and take the hens away," he said to the fox.

But the fox stood at a distance. "Let them go one by one," she said. "Let them go — I'll catch them."

So the man let go one hen. The fox caught it, and the second, and the third. But then the man let go the dog. The fox fled into the wood and

the dog after her. She ran to her lair, jumped in, and hid. And the dog stood over the lair and yelped.

The man came to the lair. "I'll dig her out all the same," he thought. "Only what am I to do so that she won't run away while I go home for the spade?"

He took an empty jug, and placed it near the lair with its mouth against the wind. The wind hummed into it and the fox thought that it was the dog growling. She sat and she sat. And then she peered out, and there was the jug.

"So it's you that was scaring me?" she said to the jug. "Just wait!"

She hung the jug by a string around her neck and carried it off to drown it. When she came to a lake she held onto the string and let the jug down into the water.

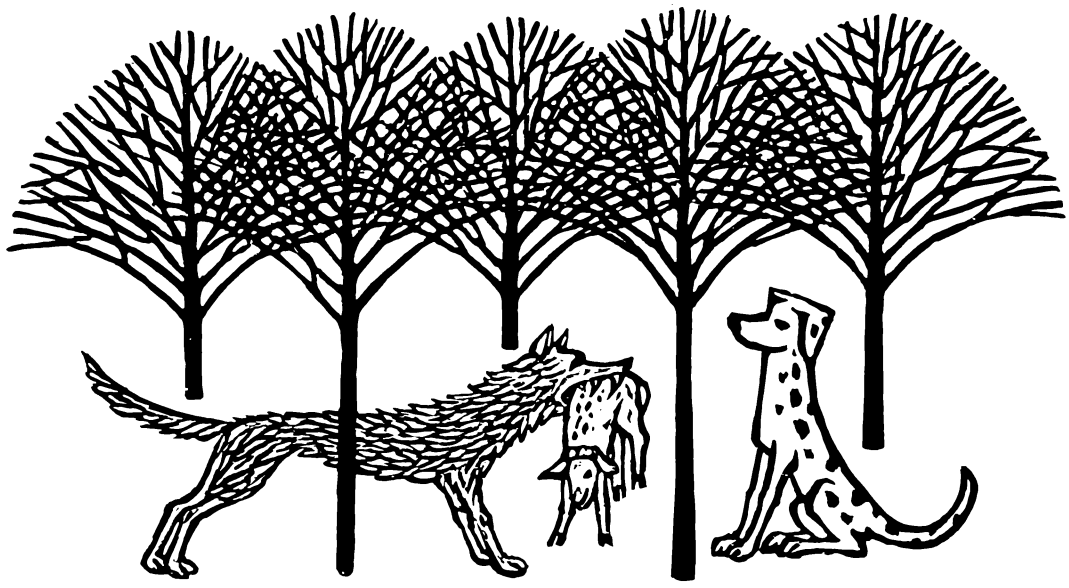
It burbled and gurgled.

"Don't beg for mercy," she said. "It won't help!"

When the jug was almost full, she pulled it out. "Pooh! What a

fool!" she said. "I did it only for a joke and here it thought I was serious!"

The fox walked along farther. And there on the path lay a balalaika. She went up to it and strummed it. "Eh," she said, "a very pretty little voice — but, like the man, it sings the song of the devil!"



THE FOOLISH DOG

There was once a farmer's dog who came to believe that he lived a poor sort of life. Day and night he ran on the chain. Winter and summer he watched over the yard. For food, the mistress brought out a scrap of bread or a little soup. As for meat, only now and then did some trifle chance to fall his way. So he made up his mind to run off to the woods and live there in freedom.

One time, when the master had unchained him for the night, the dog took his chance and ran out of the farmyard. He roamed up and down

the woods, whining for something to eat. But nothing chanced to come his way.

Along came a wolf. "Why are you roaming about here, Dog?" he asked.

"I'm looking for something to eat," the dog replied.

"All the food in the woods is mine!" the wolf cried. "Take yourself off!"

"But I've run away from my master," the dog said. "I no longer want to serve him, fighting all comers. I want to live in freedom."

"Well, in that case, come along with me," said the wolf. "I'll show you how to gain a living."

They went out of the woods into a field, and there some lambs were grazing. The wolf stood behind a bush and began to scrape up the earth with his front paws and to eat the dirt. As he ate, he asked the dog, "Is my fur beginning to bristle?"

"It is," the dog said.

"And my eyes — are they turning glassy?"

"They are."

"Very much?"

"No, not very much as yet."

The wolf pawed and ate more dirt. Then he asked, "And how now?"

"Oh," said the dog, "your fur is standing quite on end, and your eyes — it's frightful how glassy they've become!"

And it was true that the fur on the wolf's back was ruffled and his eyes had reddened.

Then the wolf hurled himself upon the lamb, and with one blow of his paw broke its back. He threw it over his shoulder and ran into the

forest. Here he divided the meat with the dog and they had a fine, hearty meal.

Having eaten his fill, the dog thought, "Life in the woods is good! So much meat hasn't fallen to me in a whole year as I've eaten here in one meal. And it's not hard to come by! Why, don't I know how to scrape and eat dirt like the wolf? Only, the wolf is foolish: he steals a mere lamb — and how much meat do you get from a lamb? Why, I'll go at once and seize a horse!"

And he ran off to look for one. But the notion struck him that he needed a companion. Otherwise, who would look and tell him whether his fur had bristled and his eyes had turned glassy?

He had no sooner had the thought when lo! he saw a cat running about the woods. "And what, Kitten, are you doing here?" the dog asked.

"I'm hunting mice," the cat said.

"Eh, what sort of food is mice! Come along with me, I'll feed you with real meat!"

So the cat went along with him. They were coming out of the woods, when they spied a mare and her colt grazing in a meadow. The dog said, "There's my prey!"

With that he began to scrape the earth with his paws and to eat the dirt. As he ate, he asked the cat whether his fur was bristling and whether his eyes had turned glassy.

"No," the cat said. "Your fur is as before, and your eyes haven't turned glassy."

The dog scraped and ate more dirt and again asked, "And how now?"

"Same as before," the cat said. "Your fur isn't standing on end and your eyes haven't turned glassy."

The dog flew into a rage. "You! Fool! Tell me that my fur is bristling and that my eyes are glassy," he instructed the cat, "for otherwise I won't catch the prey!"

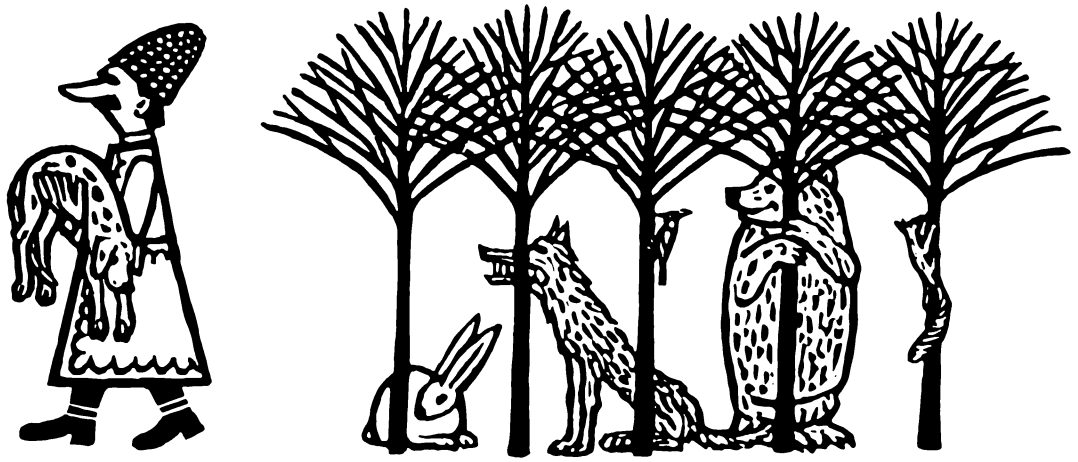
Again the dog scraped the soil and ate. "Well?" he asked after a moment.

"Your fur is bristly," said the cat, "and your eyes are glassy."

With that the dog hurled himself upon the colt, meaning to bite through its throat. But the colt gave him a kick with its hoofs and the dog turned a somersault. The colt ran off.

The mare kept on grazing, from time to time glancing at the dog. And when he had come to his senses a little, she said, "You're a fool, Dog. Who ever heard of attacking a horse from the front? You have to do it from behind so that the horse won't notice. Now try eating me up from behind."

Glad for this sensible advice, the dog again began to scrape the soil and to eat it, all the while asking the cat whether his fur was standing on end and his eyes had turned glassy.



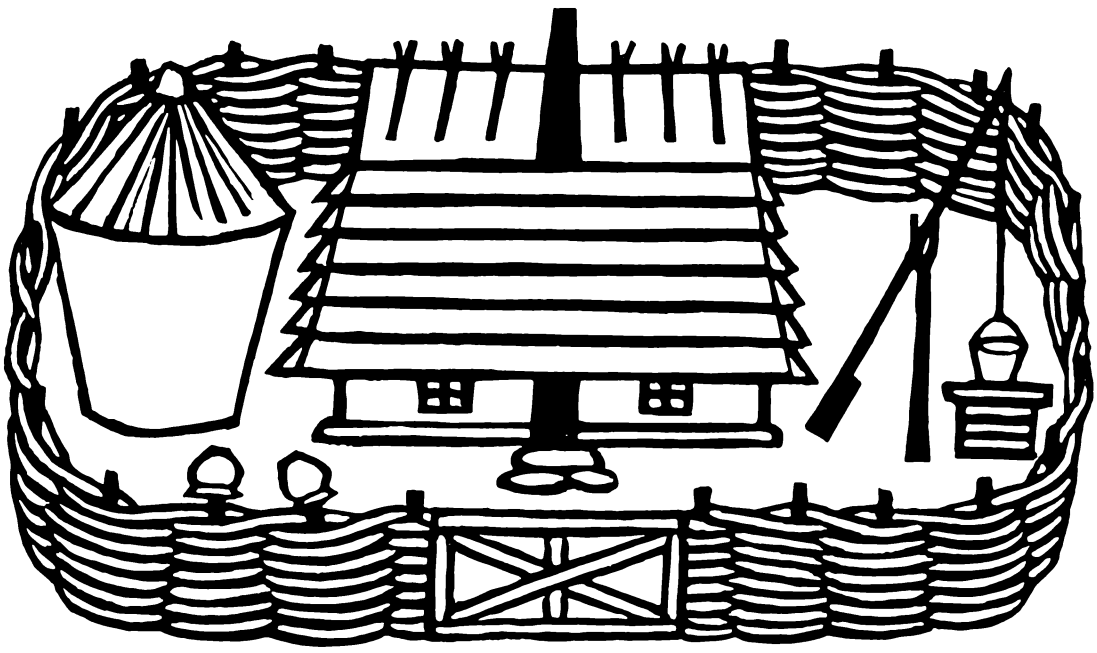
"On end," said the cat at last. "Glassy."

So the dog backed up and jumped at the mare from behind. She flashed out her hoofs and almost cracked his skull.

As the dog came tumbling down, the cat said, "Eh, brother, I see that your daily bread is hard to come by. I'd rather hunt mice."

With that, she left for the woods.

As for the dog, he lay in the meadow till evening, when his master found him, covered him, and carried him home.



THE FARMYARD

A GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A CHICK.
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A DUCK.
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
WHILE THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A GOOSE.
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
WHILE THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A LAMB.
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
WHILE THE GOOSE GAGGLES "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A KID.
AND THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
WHILE THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A CALF.
AND THE CALF BAWLS, "MOO MOO MOO,"
WHILE THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A DOG.
AND THE DOG BARKS, "HOW HOW HOW,"
WHILE THE CALF BAWLS, "MOO MOO MOO,"
AND THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A CAT.
AND THE CAT MEWS, "NIOW NIOW NIOW,"
WHILE THE DOG BARKS, "HOW HOW HOW,"
AND THE CALF BAWLS, "MOO MOO MOO,"
AND THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A BULLOCK.
AND THE BULLOCK PAWS THE GROUND
WHILE THE CAT MEWS, "NIOW NIOW NIOW,"
AND THE DOG BARKS, "HOW HOW HOW,"
AND THE CALF BAWLS, "MOO MOO MOO,"
AND THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

THE GOOD MAN KNEW NOT
WHAT TO LIVE ON,
HAD TO BUY HIMSELF A CART.
AND THE CART CREAKS, "SCREAKY-REAKY,"
WHILE THE BULLOCK PAWS THE GROUND
AND THE CAT MEWS, "NIOW NIOW NIOW,"
AND THE DOG BARKS, "HOW HOW HOW,"
AND THE CALF BAWLS, "MOO MOO MOO,"
AND THE YOUNG KID FRISKS AND FROLICS
AND THE LAMB BLEATS, "MEH MEH MEH,"
AND THE GOOSE GAGGLES, "GEH GEH GEH,"
AND THE DUCKLING SNAPS ITS BEAK
AND THE CHICK IN THE ENTRY CHIRPS,
"TA-RA-RA-RA-RA!"

Marie Bloch has reached into her own Ukrainian background for these stories, for they are some that she listened to in her childhood. In making these stories available to American children, Mrs. Bloch has proved that she is a fine raconteur, one that children will listen to again and again.

And children will delight in the wonderful illustrations of *J. Hnizdovsky*, whose works are in the Boston Museum, the Cleveland Museum and a number of other art museums. Of Ukrainian birth, Mr. Hnizdovsky knew most of the stories in this book from his childhood.

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